

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE GREATER
READING 16TH ANNUAL DR. MAR-
TIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRA-
TION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the organizers of The Greater Reading Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, a fantastic community event celebrating its 16th year on January 12, 2007.

This event is one part of a holiday weekend devoted to celebrating the contributions to history and the legacy of a man who was so important to our nation—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Through non-violent protest and peaceful demonstration, Dr. King taught us lessons of equality, tolerance and understanding by drawing attention to the social injustice and racial discrimination experienced by so many of our fellow Americans for far too long.

During this year's celebration, community leaders like Mr. Albert Boscov, Ms. Barbara Marshall, Captain Bill Jimenez and Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell will receive the 2006 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Image Award. This award, given annually during the celebration, is bestowed on those community leaders who exemplify the spirit of Dr. King's life-mission and who strive to make our society a better place for all to live.

Fellowship, friendship and family will fill the air as my constituents from the greater Reading area join together to celebrate Dr. King and honor his memory.

So I ask, Madam Speaker, that my colleagues join me today in recognizing all the hard work and effort that is sure to make the Greater Reading 16th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration an event most benefiting of the community and of Dr. King's legacy to us all.

TRIBUTE TO QUINTANNA WILSON
HALL ALLINIECE

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor the memory of Quintanna Wilson Hall Alliniece. Mrs. Alliniece lived a life dedicated to her strong faith and to the education of multiple generations of Houston students.

Mrs. Alliniece was born in Brazoria County, Texas and moved to Houston to attend high school. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the Houston College for Negroes in 1942 and a Masters degree in Education from Texas Southern University.

A leader in her community, Mrs. Alliniece taught English and Mathematics for over forty

years in the Sweeny and Houston Independent School Districts. She held leadership roles in numerous organizations including the Houston League of Business and Professional Women, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry, and the YWCA. Mrs. Alliniece was also a life-long member of the Greater Zion Missionary Baptist Church where she served as Mission II President for over 35 years.

Finally, Madam Speaker, Quintanna Wilson Hall Alliniece will be missed dearly by her son and my close friend Anthony Hall Jr. He is a well-respected member of the Houston community and Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Houston. She will also be missed by her daughter-in law Carolyn, grandchildren, sisters and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She will be remembered in the City of Houston as a dedicated educator and valued community leader. May she rest in the peace she has richly earned.

IN OPPOSITION TO ESCALATION
OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, this week, President Bush confirmed what I have known for some time: He is delusional. Twenty-thousand more troops in Iraq? No one supports this escalation: not the Joint Chiefs of Staff, not the Iraq Study Group and certainly not the American people.

This administration has made mistake after mistake in an unnecessary war of its choosing. Now the President insists on sacrificing more lives, more money, and more goodwill on an increasingly lost cause.

If God really does talk to this President, I wish God would tell the President to "Bring the troops home now!" This is what the Iraqis need and it's what the American people overwhelmingly declared they wanted in November.

President Bush is incapable of managing the debacle in Iraq. Congress must therefore take matters into its own hands, blocking funding for the "surge" in particular and stopping all funding for the war in Iraq in general. Let's bring our troops home.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBU-
TIONS OF KOREAN AMERICANS

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 104th anniversary of the arrival of the first Korean immigrants to the United States, which is this Saturday, Jan-

uary 13, 2007. This date also marks the annual celebration of Korean American Day as designated by the Centennial Committees of Korean Immigration and Korean Americans.

Korean Americans have thrived in the United States since their arrival in the Hawaiian Islands in 1903. The contributions of Korean Americans to our society are found in nearly every community across our country and span the fields of arts and entertainment, economics, medicine, science and religion, among many others. Many Korean immigrants have established successful new businesses, have risen to assume important civic leadership roles within their communities, and have developed pioneering, lifesaving medical procedures.

In the early 1950s, thousands of Koreans, fleeing from war, poverty and desolation, came to the United States. The trend of Koreans immigrating to the United States continued in the years to come. In the 1960s, President John F. Kennedy lifted the United States security clearance requirement which restricted travel to and from Guam. The lifting of this security clearance requirement enabled immigration to and international investment on Guam from Korea and other countries in Asia.

Koreans began to establish residence on Guam as early as the 1970s, and in the 1980s many new Korean families arrived on island to establish a new beginning in America. Today, Korean Americans are an integral part of our island family. On this day, we celebrate the richness of their culture, their traditions, their achievements, and their contributions to our community. To that end, I also want to recognize the Korean Association of Guam. The Association serves as an important support group for new immigrants from Korea, and through its efforts, the professional and civic interests of the Korean American community on Guam are preserved and advanced.

The contributions of Korean Americans are found not only in Guam, but also in every community across the United States. Korean Americans are key contributors in the economic, medical, academic and religious fields. Notably, at least 4,000 Korean Americans serve in the United States Armed Forces. Many of these servicemembers have completed tours of duty in the Global War on Terrorism or are deployed in Iraq. Whether they are serving as leaders in their communities or fighting alongside their fellow Americans in defense of our country, Korean Americans have demonstrated their significant presence in and contributions to the United States.

I wish to express my heartfelt support for the greater Korean American community on the occasion of the 104th anniversary of the arrival of the first Korean immigrants to the United States. In doing so, I also take the opportunity to recognize the growth and contributions of the Korean Association of Guam, which was established to advance the professional and civic interests of Korean Americans in our community. Today, the Korean Association of Guam serves as an important welcoming support group for new immigrants from

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Korea. Through the continued efforts and contributions of Korean Americans, the ties of United States with Korea will be strengthened in the years to come.

IRAQ INSIGHTS

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, distinguished colleagues, as we address the complex challenges in Iraq, I think it is important that we hear all points of view. For that reason, I am submitting for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the firsthand observations of a young Army officer who has recently served in Iraq:

IRAQ: A SOLDIER'S PERSPECTIVE

You asked me to put together some thoughts on my experience in Iraq. First, Iraq is a very complex nation with huge differences between regions and locations. The experience of one battalion can be completely different from the experience of another next to it. Every area is different. My views reflect my very narrow vantage point after less than 12 months in a tiny corner of a very large country.

Bottom line up front—I do not believe that we are winning in Iraq. This is not because we screwed up or because we lack the will, the leadership, or the resources to win. I think we have thousands of smart, brave, and talented people who are giving everything they have to make us successful. I think the American people have given us their very best sons and daughters and more than enough money and equipment to achieve our goals. Despite this, it is clear that our current strategy is not likely to produce a secure, stable, and democratic state in the Middle East. I don't know who is to blame for this and I don't really think it matters. Since we are spending the blood and treasure of the American people at an unprecedented rate, we owe it to our nation to figure out a strategy that has some hope of success or to find an alternative end state that protects our long term interest. I don't know what that strategy is, but I can offer some insights from my limited experience. This may help those smarter than me to sort out what might work from what won't work.

Political Warfare: The hardest thing for us to adjust to once we hit the ground and really tried our hand at this counter-insurgency thing was the importance of personal relationships. They can have a decisive impact on the conflict and it really doesn't matter what scale you are dealing with. Whether it is the relationship between a local shop owner and a squad leader or the relationship between the Brigade Commander and the Provincial Governor, our day to day dealings with the Iraqis and the friendships that we developed with local opinion makers from the village to the national level were the most important contribution that we made to the campaign.

The Army has a method for designing a good military campaign. You study your enemy, define the source of his strength (his 'center of gravity' in military language), figure out the most vulnerable place to attack that strength, and then design a series of missions to achieve your goal. The focus is on defeating the enemy by attacking the source of his strength. We figured out pretty quickly that this kind of strategy would not work. We could have easily expended all of our resources trying to chase down the guys on our 'most wanted' list. What we found

though is that every time we killed a terrorist (and we killed a lot of terrorists) we created ten more because now his brother, cousin, and uncle all had to seek revenge against us. It just seemed so counter-productive.

Our real goal was to persuade our Iraqi friends and allies to actively and publicly support us. We wanted them to help us tip the balance of public opinion in our favor. To influence these key individuals, we gave them funding and allowed them to take credit for civil works projects. We provided security when needed and gave them prestige by showing publicly that our commander listened to their advice. We discovered that we were not fighting a military campaign, but a political campaign—not too different from what a small town mayor might do to win re-election back in the U.S.

I don't want to give the impression that we never had to fight. There was plenty of violence and plenty of people who needed to be killed or captured. But fighting was not our goal and winning a fight did very little to achieve our long-term purpose. Our goals were political in nature. Fighting terrorists was only something we did when needed, because it interfered with our political objectives. If we could ignore the terrorists, we were winning. If we had to stop our economic and political activities in order to fight terrorists, they were winning.

This may seem like a minor difference in viewpoint, but I think it is extremely important. Every region is different, but if a unit goes into Iraq with a focus on killing bad guys, they will find more than enough bad guys to kill. After a year, their region will be as bad as or worse than it was when they arrived. On the other hand, if they focus on waging a political campaign that builds relationships with key opinion makers, and tips public opinion in their favor, they will start to see real, permanent change. Sitting down and eating goat with a prominent and respected sheik can be more valuable than a hundred midnight raids.

The U.S. Army has done a better job training its combat formations than any army in history. However, we have much to learn as an Army about how to best teach and train this style of counter-insurgency warfare. It is easier to run a rifle range than train a squad leader how to negotiate with an Arab sheik. The Army should accept that counterinsurgency will be a prominent part of our future. We will need to educate and train our future leaders to deal with the inherent unpredictability of human behavior that is so critical in this type of warfare.

The Army is planning to invest billions of dollars in a new suite of military vehicles that will 'eliminate uncertainty' by inter-netting every weapon on the battlefield to provide near-perfect situational awareness. I'm sure this will have its advantages in the future, but I think this investment is misguided. In a year in Iraq that had no shortage of enemy contact, I never needed to see down the barrel of a tank or Bradley. We had smart, well-trained soldiers who knew when and who to shoot. If leaders started getting involved in that decision, we almost always screwed it up. The guy on the ground knows the situation better than anyone. The more that technology enables his leader to see what he sees, the less his judgment and instinct will be used.

Iraq has taught us that uncertainty will always be a major factor in warfare. War is a distinctly human phenomenon and man is notoriously unpredictable. Trying to lift the fog of war with information technology is a hopeless task and a waste of resources. We should invest those dollars revamping our officer and NCO education systems to teach young leaders how to handle Iraqi farmers,

Afghan mullahs, and Sudanese warlords. A squad leader with a thorough understanding of Shia Islam and the history of Iraq is a lot more valuable than a squad leader with a camera on the end of his rifle. War always has been and always will be about people. If we want to revolutionize our Army we should invest in educating and training our people.

Enemy Motivation: During the course of the year, I had the chance to talk to a few leaders from the Mahdi militia and a few jihadists from the Sunni side. What amazed me about these guys is the total lack of any collective, long-term vision about why they are fighting us. There is no practical end state that they are trying to achieve. The radicals from both camps are absolutely convinced that they are under obligation from Allah to kill non-Muslims who occupy Arab lands regardless of the long-term consequences for their country. There is no amount of practical reasoning that will change this viewpoint. We have invested millions of dollars in public works projects in some towns to improve the lives of the people only to see citizens from those same towns attack and, in some cases, kill our soldiers. This is not rational behavior.

I believe that the majority of the insurgents fight us because they want the prestige and respect that other Muslims in their history and in neighboring countries have obtained by fighting foreign occupation. This reality should impact our national policy and our expectations. We have to accept the inconvenient fact that there will always be a significant level of insurgency in Iraq so long as non-Muslim troops occupy the country. No amount of political settlement or economic development will change that. This is something that our Congress and our Administration have to come to terms with. Unfortunately, I don't have any brilliant ideas on how to deal with this, but I am convinced that the insurgency in Iraq will not end one day before the last American soldier leaves the country. This is a reality that we must accept and must plan for.

Iraqi Security Forces: The Iraqi security forces (Army and Police) that I worked with ranged from superb to completely incompetent. Like any organization, the character of the unit was largely determined by the character of the commanding officer. Many were excellent (the best officers, in my experience, came from Saddam's old Army). Most officers did a great job when facing Sunni-based insurgents. In fact, we had to keep a close eye on most units to make sure they were not too heavy-handed against the Sunnis. When we dealt with the Shia, especially the Mahdi militia, things got a lot more complicated. Many officers were reluctant to fight the Shia militias because they had a well-justified fear for the security of their family. I have seen senior Iraqi officers flat refuse to follow American soldiers in pursuit of Shia insurgents—even when those insurgents just killed their own soldiers.

An Iraqi officer in either the police or the Army has to walk a very fine line. If he does not cooperate with the Americans, he risks losing the money, equipment, and prestige that come from American support. If he cooperates completely, especially in the pursuit of Shia targets, he is labeled a traitor, and his family and career can be in great danger. I have seen members of the National Assembly and Provincial Governors place tremendous pressure on police and Army commanders to get them to look the other way when it came to Shia militia activity. The few ISF commanders who are truly 'independent' are constantly under threat of being fired or worse. Most commanders manage to survive by establishing a delicate truce with the Shia radicals. They openly

profess support for the Americans and talk about fighting the militia in public. In private, they pass information about our operations and provide early warning to the militias the minute we leave the front gate of our camp. This is not speculation—my unit witnessed this many times.

I will never understand why the Coalition forfeited control of the hiring and firing of Iraqi Army and Police commanders over to a government that was so deeply divided in its loyalty. The resulting divided loyalty within the leadership of the ISF is probably the greatest threat to Coalition interests today. I doubt we can reverse this, but I can assure you that as long as the Iraqi government decides who commands and who doesn't in the ISF, they will be unable to deal with the Shia militias in any meaningful way. The Coalition, through our advisory teams should exert a greater degree of influence over the selection of Iraqi battlefield commanders. This will have a bigger impact on the quality of the Iraqi security forces than anything else we can do.

Key-Man Strategy: To find an honest, courageous, and liberal-minded Iraqi within the security forces is absolute pure gold. To have one as the police chief or military commander for your area is every US commander's dream. If these guys are so important to our strategy, then their selection, promotion, and protection should be a central component of our campaign plan. I think the Coalition has, in a good faith attempt to bolster the Iraqi ministries, stayed too aloof and uninvolved from these vital appointments. The Mahdi militia and Badr Corps, who do not share our sense of fair play, have filled the void and are aggressively filling the senior ranks of the ISF with their most loyal supporters.

I would suggest that the Coalition embark on a "Key Man Strategy" where great attention is devoted to the character and trustworthiness of all Security Force commanders down to the battalion and district police chief level. Engagement reports should be collected and assessments done so that the highest levels of the Coalition and Iraqi government have a fair and independent assessment of all the key battlefield commanders in the ISF.

Because of the convoluted and duplicitous nature of Arab politics, senior Iraqi leaders have great difficulty getting accurate information on the quality of their leadership at the tactical level. Because of this information vacuum, it is often difficult for a minister to say no when a group of 'concerned citizens' from the Mahdi militia approach and ask him to replace a particularly effective police chief. If the Coalition leaders who regularly work with the ministries had a more detailed assessment of these key men and their capabilities and limitations, then they could better advise the Iraqi leaders who are making the tough calls. We can also exert pressure to prevent attempts to fire independent leaders and replace them with militia supporters.

Entire provinces can be won or lost in the selection of Iraqi brigade commanders and Provincial police chiefs. The Coalition will probably never regain the exclusive right to select and remove these men, but we must devote enough attention to this process in order to influence it.

Militias: We will never reach any kind of acceptable political settlement as long as the Coalition and the Iraqi Government allow legitimate political parties to hold seats in the National Assembly while they finance and maintain military auxiliary wings that attack and kill Iraqi and American soldiers. These parties have enough clout in PM Maliki's administration to effectively block any major military operation against the militias. This is an impossible situation.

I don't have the expertise to comment on whether or not a temporary 'troop surge' is necessary. I can say, however, that a troop surge is pointless if we cannot set the political conditions beforehand that allow us to act freely against the militia. The Administration should seriously consider the legal implications of declaring the Jaysh al-Mahdi (Mahdi militia) a designated hostile force. This declaration gives local commanders much greater latitude to deal with this threat and will eventually force the organization to go completely underground. I am not a military lawyer so I don't know all the implications of such a move but I think it bears a hard look. We should also look for ways to continue to publicly expose the connections between the legitimate political activities of parties like the OMS (Office to the Martyr Sadr) and the brutal acts carried out by the Mahdi militia. This technique has shown some success in counter-insurgencies in the past because it drives a wedge between the political and military wings of the organization.

Because both militias are so tightly associated with the police and army, they receive a lot of their funding and weapons from these sources. The American taxpayer remains the greatest funding source for the Mahdi militia. We have fought militia members in police uniforms carrying weapons that were issued from U.S. warehouses. We will not be able to cut that funding source until the Iraqi government purges its senior ranks of militia loyalists.

The second biggest source of funding, in my experience, is Iraq's foreign neighbors. Iraqis tend to be very nationalistic so the idea of foreign neighbors providing weapons and money to the militia is very distasteful to most. I don't understand why we have not exploited this weakness. Foreign funding and training of the militias remains an open secret within the Coalition. Why isn't this front page news in the Arab world? A public exposure of extensive militia cooperation with Iraq's neighbors could mortally wound the militias by making them appear to be a tool of would-be foreign occupiers.

The Talent Drain: Every few years, someone makes a big deal about all the junior officers leaving the Army. In most cases, this is a natural part of the process and something that the Army can easily compensate for. We need fewer Majors than we do Captains. From my limited perspective, however, I am very concerned this time around. The Army is enduring a brutal deployment cycle (12 months on, 12 months off for many soldiers) with no end in sight. Because of this, we are bleeding talent at an unprecedented rate. Of the hundred or so junior officers in my brigade, I know of only a handful that intend to stay in long enough to command a company. In most cases, it is the most talented officers who are the first to go. I hope that our unit is not typical of the rest of the Army.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of good company commanders to the health of an Army—especially an Army fighting counter-insurgency. Company commanders are the ones who decide every day what risks are worth taking and what are not. They lead most of our most important negotiations with local leaders. They chose who the squad leaders and platoon sergeants will be who lead America's young men in battle. Our company commanders in Iraq made life and death decisions every day. We have to have top-notch junior officers to fill these positions or the Army and our expedition in Iraq are both in great peril.

This is not just a long-term problem. This could have serious short-term consequences in Iraq. If we don't have our best talent commanding our combat company formations on

the ground in Iraq, any strategy that we try to implement over the next few years will be doomed to failure.

Super-FOBs: When we first arrived in Iraq, I was surprised at the size of some of the larger American bases like Balad and Camp Victory in Baghdad. They are small American cities filled with thousands of soldiers who have never left the wire or met an Iraqi. They are guarded by an entire combat battalion because of their size.

Logistics bases are necessary and there is a certain economy that comes with consolidating camps but I think we have lost our balance somewhere. I would estimate that between 10 to 20 percent of the soldiers serving in Iraq actively engage the Iraqi people, aid in reconstruction, or provide security for Iraqi neighborhoods. The rest are involved in logistics, camp management, and staff functions.

Someone, of course, has to deliver the mail and the American Army in Iraq is a logistical marvel that few armies in the world could replicate. However, the next time you hear that we have 150,000 'boots on the ground', I think it is important to recognize that probably somewhere less than 30,000 soldiers actually carry on their mission outside of these huge sanctuaries that we have constructed. When you compare this with an Iraqi population of around 27 million, you can see how daunting this task is.

I am not suggesting that we should send all the mail clerks on patrol. Some units have tried this and found that both their logistics and operations have suffered for it. I do believe that consolidation of bases into large super-FOBs leads to a certain isolationism that causes one to forget why we are all there in the first place. We have division and Corps staffs that approach 1,000 soldiers in size. These large organizations consume a great deal of talent. Some of our best warfighters, men with extensive combat experience, spend their year in Iraq planning the construction of the new camp dining facility. Somehow, we have lost our balance.

This same tendency toward consolidation has affected our advisory teams for the Iraqi Army. The unit advisory teams that work with the Iraqi Army are our main effort and our best hope for a successful outcome to this fight. Very few of the advisory teams, however, actually live with their Iraqi battalion or brigade. Most teams live on the nearest large American camp and commute to work when conditions permit. I know of one team that had a two-hour commute on very dangerous road from their camp to their Iraqi unit. After they lost a soldier to an IED on that road, they practically stopped visiting the unit all together. By the time we redeployed, that Iraqi unit was all but an auxiliary wing of the Mahdi militia. I am not sure if the advisory team could have stopped this, but their absence certainly helped to accelerate it.

There is no replacement for boots on the ground. The more we consolidate troops into large base camps and allocate our best talent to internal maintenance and support functions instead of winning the fight, the harder it is for us to influence the population and, when necessary, impose our will.

As a final point, I think it is important to step back and look at this from a historical perspective. Despite all our warts, the American Army is doing something pretty amazing in Iraq. For three years, American soldiers, many still in their teens, all volunteers, have faced an enemy that refuses to accept any moral limits on warfare. We have seen the enemy dress in women's clothing, use Iraqi children as human shields, hide weapons in their mosques, and torture the innocent and defenseless. In spite of all this, our young soldiers have shown enormous restraint and even greater compassion. I have

heard Iraqi interpreters marvel that a squad of soldiers would capture a man who, only minutes before, tried to kill them, and bring him unharmed to the detention facility on our camp. This kind of mercy is unheard of in the Arab culture.

Unfortunately, this story will not make the headlines back home. But this is the story of the American soldier in Iraq. It is a story of unprecedented courage, restraint, and compassion for a foreign people. It is a story of the strong trying, against all odds, to protect the weak and defenseless from a dark and hopeless future. I have no idea how the American expedition in Iraq will end. I doubt it will end well. But I do hope that the courage and civility of the American soldiers who fought there will not be forgotten both here and in Iraq.

IN MEMORY OF VETERAN CARL
GENE YOUNG, SR.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Vietnam Veteran Carl Gene Young, Sr., who passed away Wednesday, January 10, at Denton Regional Medical Center due to a myocardial infarction.

A native of Denton, Texas, Mr. Young served as a city council member for 6 years before retiring in 2001. He was an outspoken, honest spokesman for southeast Denton, and was known as an advocate of affordable housing and diversity in city government. Mr. Young was devoted to those he represented and was genuinely concerned with any issues affecting them. Friends and former colleagues will always remember him for his dedication and loyalty to his community.

Before joining the city council, Mr. Young served in the First Air Cavalry in the Vietnam War. He later organized an annual Easter egg hunt to honor 16 soldiers that were killed on Easter Day 1968. Veteran Carl Gene Young, Sr., was a true patriot and was proud to serve our country.

I worked alongside Mr. Young on the Denton County health executive director selection committee. The committee assignment was one that would affect every citizen in Denton County, and Mr. Young was thoughtful and thorough in his duties. I remember him as insightful and truly caring.

In addition to his role as a politician and soldier, Mr. Young was also a loving husband and father. He deeply cared for his family and friends, and was a strong pillar in our community. I extend my dearest sympathies to his family and friends. Veteran Carl Gene Young, Sr., will be deeply missed and his service to our community will always be greatly appreciated.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF
PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH
FORD

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise with my colleagues today in support of

House Resolution 15, honoring the late Honorable Gerald Rudolph Ford, the 38th President of the United States.

Here in this Chamber, President Ford served dutifully for 24 years, representing the people of the Fifth District of Michigan from 1949 until his ascension to the Oval Office. As a Congressman, Gerald Ford's warmth, approachability, and affability made him one of the most highly regarded Members of his day.

It was these qualities which would shape Gerald Ford into an excellent House floor leader for his party, a position he held for 8 years until his appointment as the 40th Vice President. During his tenure as minority leader, Gerald Ford set a standard of fairness, diplomacy, and cooperation to which all of us can aspire.

As both Vice President and President, Gerald Ford was called to serve in positions of great responsibility during a troubled time in our Nation's history. Ford accepted his powers and responsibilities with the same steadfast composure and patience for which he had become known as a Congressman.

As a man known for his ability to create consensus, compromise, and conciliation, he was well suited to take the helm of America and navigate the turbulent storm it faced. President Ford's gentle nature helped soothe the deep scars America faced after an arduous period of strife at home and abroad.

Madam Speaker, Gerald Ford served our country with a patient hand, an understanding mind, and a reassuring voice. His time in Congress and in the White House leave behind a legacy of commitment, passion, and comity that we will all remember.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MART
PANTHERS, STATE 2A DIVISION
II CHAMPIONS

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great pride to congratulate Coach Rusty Nail and the Mart High School Panthers on their 2006 2A Division II State football championship. Their victory is the culmination of years of hard work, dedication and sacrifice and inspires all of us who have followed their progress with great interest. The team and coaching staff have demonstrated outstanding talent and commitment to achieving their goals.

Mart High School has an outstanding history of representing their community and Central Texas with integrity and I am proud to represent such exceptional educators, coaches, and students in Congress.

Winning this State championship is an extraordinary accomplishment that holds lessons that will serve them well throughout their lives. Chief among them is the confidence that comes with knowing that success can be achieved in life when you are willing to set goals and work hard to achieve them.

The Mart Panthers have made history and honored not only their school, but their community, fans and Central Texas by bringing home a State football championship. The Panthers victory brought the State championship trophy home to Mart for the fourth time with an impressive record of 15–1.

Congratulations again to the Mart Panthers on their 2006 2A Division II State football championship. Go Panthers.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF OF POLICE STEVE MCFADDEN'S OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO THE CITY OF LEWISVILLE

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Lewisville Chief of Police Steve McFadden. After more than 38 years in municipal service, 34 years of which were served as Chief of Police, Mr. Steve McFadden will retire in February 2007.

Mr. Steve McFadden grew up in a small town outside of Paris, Texas. After graduation from East Lamar High School, he served in the U.S. Army for three years where he discovered his calling into law enforcement. He later received a Bachelor of Science degree from East Texas State University. Due to Mr. McFadden's strong leadership abilities and thorough education, he was promoted to Police Chief within five years of serving as a police officer.

In November of 1977, Mr. McFadden became Chief of Police in Lewisville, Texas. At that time there were only 27 sworn officers, a force that has grown drastically to include 136 officers today. The crime rates in Lewisville have been kept low due largely to the strong cooperation of the police department. Chief McFadden believed that one of the most integral aspects that contributed to their department success was honesty and trust. He believed that his job as police chief was not any more important than those jobs of the officers and dispatchers. Mr. McFadden inspired a sense of pride and integrity in his staff. He was one of the most experienced and respected police chiefs in Texas, and his retirement is viewed as a great loss to the department and to the community.

The decision to retire was not an easy one for Mr. McFadden, as he will truly miss his colleagues and serving our community as Lewisville Chief of Police. He does, however, look forward to spending more time with his wife, Judy McFadden, his two daughters, his son, and his granddaughter.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Steve McFadden for decades of hard work and selfless dedication given to the citizens of Lewisville, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE 2007
"NUESTRO ORGULLO LATINO"
CELEBRATION AND ITS HONOREES

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an event, the "Nuestro

Orgullo Latino" celebration, Our Latin Pride, which honors Hispanics in the western New York area that have achieved professional success in the passing year.

This year the event will recognize 16 individuals that have achieved various accomplishments. The honorees include an international author, legal professionals, educators, municipal employees and private business owners.

This year's honorees are: Cesar Cabrera, Tamara Pozantides, Lorraine Clemente, David Rodriguez, Nestor Hernandez, Eugenio Russi, Lourdes T. Iglesias, Melissa Sanchez, Olga Karman, Denise Gonez-Santos, Elizabeth Martinez-Fildes, Betty Calvo Torres, David Mauricio, Maria Cruz Torres, Doris Carbonell-Medina, and Roddy Torres.

This event is presented by Hispanics United of Buffalo, an organization that provides services to thousands a year in Buffalo's west side. The event is also organized by the Hispanic Alliance of Western New York, a civic association that is committed to community affairs for Buffalo's Latino community.

Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and gratitude that I stand here today joining many others in commending the honorees of this year's event for their accomplishments and wishing them a continually prosperous and successful future.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, over 90% of people with Medicare, that's 38 million Americans, get their prescription drugs through Medicare Part D. These seniors are satisfied with their coverage and are finally receiving the drugs they need at costs they can afford.

Consistently, 80% of beneficiaries report they are satisfied with their current coverage and drug plans. Those include seniors known as dual-eligibles, the poorest seniors eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, because they are seeing more choices and paying less money for quality care.

My constituent, Nancy Santheson of Roswell, New Mexico, was spending almost \$800/month on one drug to treat osteoporosis. She had zero coverage the first year her doctor prescribed it. Once she signed up for her Medicare Part D plan, it went down to only \$60/month. This drug is not listed on the Veterans' Administration's national formulary. Had Nancy been dependent on the price negotiations the VA administers and the Democrats have proposed, she would not have had coverage of this drug, a new treatment that has shown great promise in reversing bone loss.

Democrats say they will fill in the donut-hole, a cost estimated to be \$450 billion over 10 years, with the savings they claim will incur through government interference in price negotiations. Yet the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have stated that they predict government involvement in price negotiations will not lead to lower costs for taxpayers or seniors.

Seniors want choice, not government controlled access to their vital prescriptions. The

leverage needed to negotiate low prices is volume buying and the ability to walk away from a deal the government decides is too expensive. This means the government will have to walk away from a deal with a drug company, and seniors would not have access to those drugs. Negotiating low prices will take priority over getting the most quality, effective drugs in our seniors' medicine cabinets.

But seniors are already getting negotiated discounts. Private insurance plans already have a strong incentive to negotiate low prices for seniors: they want to control their own costs and compete for new enrollees to choose their plan. Premiums for the drug basic benefit are offered at an average of \$22/month for seniors in 2007, down from \$23 in 2006. This is \$15 less than the \$37/month coverage premiums were originally projected to cost. In fact, Democrats wanted to set premiums on seniors at a static \$35/month, \$13 more than average beneficiaries will pay next year. This proves that competition is working and our seniors are receiving benefits cheaper than ever imagined.

Democrats point to the Veterans' Administration as a model for this government price controlled plan. But the latest information from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services suggests that almost 40% of veterans eligible for both VA and Medicare benefits choose to get their prescriptions through Medicare Part D, the plan with more choices.

Time and again, veterans in my district have been frustrated that in order to receive the best benefits, they must get their drugs through an impersonal mail order program. In fact, 76% of veterans' prescriptions are distributed through mail order. And year after year efforts are made to encourage more veterans to get their prescriptions through mail order. Why put seniors in this position when we do not have to? Our seniors will face threats to their ability to purchase drugs from local pharmacies, just as veterans face, and may have to retrieve their drugs through an impersonal mail-order program, not their trusted pharmacist.

Mr. Speaker, our seniors deserve to have access to the drugs they need at the lowest costs possible. They are getting both now, and Democrats want to take that away. We must continue to fight for our seniors and I encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 4.

MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION TO THE MEMBERS OF HITRON

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Joint Interagency Task Force, the Navy and the Coast Guard drug interdiction forces for their role in seizing more than 43,420 pounds of cocaine during operations over the last several months in the Pacific. In particular, I would like to commend the Jacksonville based Coast Guard Helicopter Tactical Interdiction Squadron, HITRON, for their critical role in missions which intercepted 8,850 pounds of cocaine that was headed for our Nation's shores. These actions represent a crucial victory in keeping drugs off our streets, out of our schools, and away from our children.

HITRON is the Coast Guard's premier airborne law enforcement unit trained and authorized to employ Airborne Use of Force. With an historic record of success, HITRON consists of eight leased AgustaWestland MH-68A StingRay helicopters. These helicopters are extremely fast and maneuverable, and they are armed and cutter-deployable. They have proven very effective at intercepting the go-fast boats favored by drug runners on both coasts.

Prior to HITRON, drug runners would simply ignore our orders to cease and desist.

HITRON now has the ability to shoot out the engines of these drug boats, preventing them from reaching our shores. During a House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security hearing the Commandant of the Coast Guard told me that HITRON is battling a thousand—every time the HITRON aircraft went after a go-fast drug boat it had stopped the drug runners cold.

America is continuing to fight the war on drugs, and these are the kinds of successes we need to win. For their contributions the HITRON unit has a lot to be proud of, and our Nation owes them a great debt of gratitude.

IN RECOGNITION OF MASSACHUSETTS STATE REPRESENTIVE
KATHLEEN M. TEAHAN FOR
FOUR DECADES OF PUBLIC
SERVICE TO THE MEN, WOMEN,
AND CHILDREN OF MASSACHUSETTS

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of a woman who has dedicated both her personal and professional life to the men, women, and children she has so thoughtfully served. Massachusetts State Representative Kathleen M. Teahan has served the citizens of Abington, East Bridgewater and Whitman for the last ten years. The impact of her work has been felt not only throughout the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts, but throughout this great Nation as a whole.

Known to be an always positive leader in both the classroom and legislature, Representative Teahan began her public service as a teacher after graduating from Bridgewater State College in 1969. Over the next three decades, she taught at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School and Gordon W. Mitchell Middle School in East Bridgewater. Yet her passion to help others and invest in the community was not limited to just the classroom. Representative Teahan's commitment to Habitat for Humanity, the Whitman Democratic Town Committee, and the Whitman Library are just a few examples of her devotion to the citizens of Massachusetts.

Encouraged and supported by her late husband Robert, Representative Teahan decided to expand her efforts to help others and was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in November 1996. Since that time, she has not only made an impact on the citizens within the 7th District but has been a national leader and role model through her involvement with issues involving health care, education, employment, and the environment,

especially finding passion in the areas of children's health and adoption.

During her time in elected office, Representative Teahan served on the House Personnel and Administration, Joint Elder Affairs, and Joint Public Health Committees and served as the House chairman of the Caucus of Women Legislators. As a sign of her strong leadership and efforts to bring about positive change, Representative Teahan was nominated by her colleagues in 2001 to participate in the Flemming Fellows Institute at the Center for Policy Alternatives. She has also participated as a Massachusetts Team Leader for the Veterans Oral History Project at the Library of Congress since 2003.

A place where her dedication and work is most evident is on the issue of oral health care. Representative Teahan served as a member of the Special Committee on Oral Health, who presented its report to the Massachusetts Legislature on March 2, 2000. Five years later, Representative Teahan became part of history when she became cochair of the Massachusetts Caucus on Oral Health, which is the first caucus on oral health in the Nation.

Those who come in contact with Representative Teahan know all too well that she will fight for the health and well being of any child, whether they are in District 7 or in another country. In 2002, she accompanied a humanitarian delegation to bring medical supplies, books, Braille texts, toys, and toothbrushes to Cuba. Representative Teahan has been honored for her legislative efforts by the Congressional Coalition Adoption Institute, Health Care for All, and the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, and the Special Olympics.

It has always been clear that Representative Teahan's most cherished asset is her family, and she values the time she will now have to spend with her four children Anne, Jean, Robert, John, and her granddaughter Jill. Even though Representative Teahan's tenure as a State Representative has ended, her passion for changing lives will not cease. She will continue to inspire the next generation to get involved in their local communities, continuing her role as educator by teaching American Government at Bridgewater State College.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with State Representative Kathy Teahan's family, friends, and fellow citizens of Massachusetts to thank her for a decade of service in the Massachusetts House of Representatives and her lifetime of service in educating all within her reach. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Representative Teahan's distinguished career, as we wish her good health and God's blessing in all of her future endeavors.

HONORING E. DAVID FOREMAN,
JR., IN RETIREMENT

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor E. David Foreman, Jr., who is retiring after a life of dedicated service in both the private advocacy sector and to the Republican Party.

David has had a long history of service to both the Republican Party of Virginia and the Republican National Committee. This record is well documented and has come full circle from his initial role as chairman of the Fairfax County Republican Party from 1970 to 1976 through his most recent role as the party's senior consultant.

During his political career, David also served on numerous exploratory, steering, advisory and finance committees for countless Republican candidates for local, State, and national office. Most notably, David was chairman of Americans for Bush in 1990 as well as chairman of the Credentials Committee at the 1996 Republican National Convention.

It was easy for "those in the know" to recognize that Mr. Foreman was a true player in local and national politics. David has been featured in the Who's Who in American Politics, Who's Who in Washington, Who's Who in Virginia Politics, as well as Who's Who in Politics in the South and Southwest.

David's love for politics complimented his knack for policy. This was demonstrated through his extensive work as a congressional and administration lobbyist for numerous American corporations. Through his role as founder and president of Foreman & Associates, David was able to effectively represent his clients in their interactions with State, local, and Federal officials as well as all Federal agencies.

While compiling this impressive legacy of private and political service, David was a loving and dedicated husband to his wife Rosemary Foreman, and father to his two children, Sheryl Olecheck and E. David Foreman III.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding E. David Foreman, Jr., and congratulating him on his deserved retirement after a distinguished career of service.

IN MEMORY OF BOBBY GENE
HICKS

HON. DAVID DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bobby Hicks, a resident of the First Congressional District of Tennessee, who passed away January 7, 2006 after an extended illness.

Bobby Hicks lived his entire life in the beautiful hills of East Tennessee and spent his adult life in a career of entrepreneurship and public service for the area he called home. A graduate of Sulphur Springs High School, Bobby worked on the farm at an early age, learning to appreciate the value of hard work. He served in the Army Reserve and worked for the Tennessee Eastman Company until choosing to begin his own business, the Hicks Construction Company, in 1970.

His career in construction was distinguished, where he served on the Johnson City Area Home Builders Association. He was president of the association in 1983 and 1984. He also served as president of the Home Builders Association of Tennessee in 1990. On two separate occasions, he was named Builder of the Year, winning the prestigious honor in 1988 and 1994. In 2002, he was inducted into the

Building Industry of Tennessee Hall of Fame and continued to be actively involved in business into his final days.

Bobby also served our area with distinction, serving 12 years as a county commissioner for Washington County. He was a member of the Washington County/Johnson City Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Board serving the same region.

From 1994 to 1998, Bobby was elected to serve the constituents of the Sixth House District of Tennessee as their State representative. He was a relentless advocate of promoting the interests of Upper East Tennessee during his time in the legislature, and I was privileged to be his successor to that seat.

Bobby's service to the community has been noted and appreciated. The library in Gray, TN, and the local Emergency Medical Service buildings have been named in his honor. In addition, one of the major State highways in our area, Highway 75, has been named as the Bobby Hicks Highway by the Tennessee General Assembly, as a result of his tireless efforts to gain the approval for necessary upgrades to this well-traveled road.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House join me this evening in offering our sympathies to the family and friends of Bobby Hicks. He was a good businessman, a fine public servant, and a decent and kind person. His service is greatly appreciated, and he will be deeply missed.

CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE
EQUITABLE COMPENSATION
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act of 2007.

The act will help to right a historic wrong that occurred during the construction of the Oahe Dam and Reservoir which inundated over 100,000 acres of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's best lands. For many years, the tribe was not provided adequate compensation.

Recognizing this wrong, Congress moved to compensate the tribe in 2000 by establishing a trust fund. While these actions were commendable, they left one important group behind—tribal members that lost privately owned lands. This act would correct that omission and give the tribe the discretion to distribute funds to individuals who are currently prohibited from receiving them.

I introduced similar legislation in the 109th Congress and was pleased to see it considered by the then-House Resources Committee's Subcommittee on Water and Power. Examination of the bill at a subcommittee hearing generated a number of constructive suggestions and, after additional consultation with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, committee staff, and administration officials, we were able to make a number of positive changes to the bill.

Though a revised version of the bill failed to pass the House last year, its companion passed the Senate in the last moments of the

109th Congress. Today, I rise to introduce a version of the Cheyenne River Sioux Equitable Compensation Amendments Act that reflects the positive collaboration from last year and has already enjoyed the approval of the Senate. It is my sincere hope that the House will recognize that work by approving this legislation as soon as possible.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act would finally provide just compensation for the taking of lands over 50 years ago. I urge its swift consideration and passage.

**PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE
NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007**

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the First Congressional District of New Jersey, I take this opportunity to enter into the RECORD my position on the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007, H.R. 4. First, I would like to congratulate Speaker PELOSI on her outstanding performance over these last few weeks in bringing the real priorities of the American people to the forefront of the 110th Congress's agenda. Reforming the House of Representatives ethics standards, increasing the minimum wage, authorizing Federal research of embryonic stem cells and providing the Secretary of Health and Human Services, HHS, the authority to negotiate drug prices with the pharmaceutical industry are all essential measures for the American people.

On January 12, 2007, I voted in favor of H.R. 4; however, I have some concerns for seniors in my home State of New Jersey. Although I believe Congress should authorize the Secretary of HHS to negotiate drug prices, I believe his authority should be limited so to not disrupt areas in which the Pharmacy Benefit Managers, PBM, are obtaining the best deal for seniors. If our goal is to ensure that all avenues of achieving price discounts are being used to benefit the seniors and individuals with disabilities in the Medicare program, then Congress should allow drug companies and PBMs, who are successfully negotiating affordable drug prices for seniors, to continue to do so without interference from HHS and focus the Secretary's attention on those areas where competition is stymied and prices are artificially inflated by drug companies.

Furthermore, I am concerned about how H.R. 4 will affect various States' prescription drug assistance programs. For example, New Jersey provides drug coverage to over 200,000 low-income seniors through two programs known as the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled program or PAAD and Senior Gold. After passage of the Medicare Prescription Drug bill, the State of New Jersey made a decision to make beneficiaries whole by providing a "wrap around" benefit to Medicare Part D. Therefore, PAAD beneficiaries continue to pay only a \$5 co-pay per prescription with no deductible, regardless of the terms of their particular Part D plan. Secondly, because PAAD maintains an open formulary for its beneficiaries, medications not

covered under Part D, are covered by PAAD. It has been argued that if the language of H.R. 4 places a restriction on medications Part D will cover, the cost of the PAAD and the Senior Gold program will increase as the burden to provide even more medications not covered by Medicare falls onto the State. As we move toward conference of the two Chambers, I want to make sure H.R. 4 does not lead to restrictions on access to new medications and gives seniors the best possible price for their medications.

Again, I commend Speaker PELOSI for a job well done and for making affordable prescription drugs for seniors a top priority in the 110th Congress.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO JIM
HOLMAN**

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I want to note for the record that a constituent of mine, Jim Holman of McLean, VA, was installed as an Eagle Scout at a ceremony on January 13, 2007. Jim is an outstanding young man who will graduate from Langley High School this June.

As many of my colleagues know, it is not easy making Eagle Scout. It takes a great deal of time, effort and determination, all of which Jim has in abundance. Jim's accomplishment is in a long tradition of scouting in the Holman family. Jim's two older brothers, Luke and Tim, were both Eagle Scouts, and his parents, John and Kay Holman, have played a significant role over the years in scouting.

Again, I want to extend my congratulations to Jim on his wonderful accomplishment.

**IN MEMORIAM OF SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL MILLER, JR. OF GALES-
BURG, IL**

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, last week western Illinois lost one of its sons in the war in Iraq. SrA Daniel B. Miller, Jr. was proudly serving in the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's Explosive Ordnance Division when a roadside bomb exploded south of Baghdad. Senior Airman Miller made the ultimate sacrifice for his country and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge his bravery, recognize his contributions to this Nation, and extend my condolences to his family, friends, and loved ones.

Senior Airman Miller, 24 years old, was born to Daniel Miller, Sr. of Galesburg and Robin Mahnesmith of Wataga, IL. He was an active member in his church's youth activities, enjoyed fishing and hunting with his friends, and excelled as a student-athlete. He graduated from ROWVA High School in Oneida, IL, in 2001 where he also played varsity football.

In 2004 Senior Airman Miller enlisted in the United States Air Force and completed basic

training in San Antonio. He was then stationed at Hill Air Force Base in Utah, working with the explosive ordnance division. Airman Miller's experience disarming explosives in the military made him interested in joining the bomb squad of a local police department once his military commitment was completed. Often the target of enemy fire as a member of the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, Airman Miller served with bravery and courage as he scoured Iraq for explosives, ensuring the safety of our ground troops.

As the oldest of five siblings, Senior Airman Miller had an extremely strong bond with his family. According to ROWVA Principal Andy Richmond, Airman Miller often visited the school after he graduated to ask former teachers how his brothers and sisters were doing. From what I've heard from his family and friends, "Dan" was loved by everyone and never asked for praise or recognition. "Dan was everybody's friend. He cared about everybody and was just a fun-loving young man," his father said.

On behalf of the communities in western and central Illinois, I would like to extend my thoughts and sincere prayers to the Miller and Mahnesmith families at this difficult time. Senior Airman Miller's courage in serving his country will not soon be forgotten and a grateful Nation stands humbled.

My heart also goes out to the families and friends of TSgt Timothy Weiner of Florida, and SrA Elizabeth A-Loncki of Delaware, who were also fatally injured in the same roadside bomb attack.

**INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION
URGING BANGLADESHI GOVERN-
MENT TO DROP JOURNALIST'S
SEDITION CHARGES**

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today, I am re-introducing a resolution with Congresswoman NITA LOWEY (D-NY) calling on the Government of Bangladesh to drop sedition charges pending against Bangladeshi journalist Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury. Mr. Choudhury faces these charges because of his belief in an interfaith dialogue between Jews and Muslims and articles he published critical of Islamic extremism. Under Bangladeshi law, sedition is a crime punishable by death.

Mr. Choudhury is a journalist in Bangladesh known for his views on expanding dialogue between Muslims and Jews, developing ties with Israel, and criticizing the rise of Islamist parties in Bangladesh. Mr. Choudhury was detained in November 2003 at Zia International Airport in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on his way to board a flight bound for Tel Aviv, Israel, to participate in the annual Hebrew Writers Conference. Mr. Choudhury's passport was seized, along with considerable sums of money and several personal items. On that same day, police raided his home and newspaper, seizing files, computers, and other valuables.

Since Bangladeshi law prohibits travel to Israel, Mr. Choudhury was first cited for a minor passport violation. He subsequently was charged with sedition, accused of espionage

as an Israeli spy, and incarcerated for 17 months. He was subjected to harsh interrogation techniques, and received no treatment for a debilitating case of glaucoma.

Despite public pledges from senior Bangladeshi Government officials that all pending legal action against Mr. Choudhury would be dropped, the government pressed forward on its prosecution of Choudhury for sedition. Mr. Choudhury won PEN USA's "Freedom to Write Award," and was presented with the American Jewish Committee's prestigious "Moral Courage Award" in absentia in Washington, DC. Mr. Choudhury's newspaper offices were bombed by Islamic extremists in July, and he was attacked by a mob in his office on October 5. Then a judge with alleged ties to an Islamic extremist group ruled that Mr. Choudhury must stand trial for sedition.

For his message of moderation and interfaith dialogue, Shoaib Choudhury is facing unjust criminal charges in an effort to silence him. Congress must send a clear message: we cannot allow moderate voices in the Muslim world to be silenced.

The resolution I introduce today calls on the Government of Bangladesh to drop all charges against Shoaib Choudhury, return his passport and possessions, and end his harassment. I want to thank Congresswoman NITA LOWEY for being the lead cosponsor of this legislation. I look forward to working with her and my other colleagues on this important human rights initiative.

IN RECOGNITION OF LORAIN KEHL ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my longtime executive assistant and scheduler, Loraine Kehl, who is retiring on February 6 after 22 years of service to this House of Representatives and the citizens of the Third Congressional District of Michigan, which I represent.

Loraine was an original staff member dating back to when I took office on Dec. 7, 1993. Prior to working for me, she served in her same capacities for my predecessor, the late Paul Henry, throughout most of his tenure in the House, dating back to 1985. Prior to working for Congressman Henry, she also worked briefly for the House Budget Committee. In her time with me, she has been my indispensable, right-hand person. She keeps me on schedule, makes sure all the bills are paid and the trains run on time. Though it should go without saying, she will be greatly and deeply missed.

Given her 22 years of service to our district, it is no surprise that she is well known and beloved among the people of Grand Rapids and West Michigan and the many other people who have done business with our office. She has been a fixture in our front office, greeting old friends and newcomers alike, offering assistance in getting White House tours and providing advice for visitors to Washington. She is deeply appreciated by my constituents for her helpful assistance, her impeccable memory for

names and faces and her consistent concern for the needs of those who call or visit. In a very real way, she has been the public face for our Washington office for more than the past two decades.

Madam Speaker, I hope that you and the rest of our colleagues will join me in wishing Loraine Kehl a very happy and fulfilling retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, last Friday, I was unavoidably absent during rollcalls 22 and 23. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 22, the motion to recommit H.R. 4 with instructions. I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 23, final passage of H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007.

SUPPORT FOR THE SAFE COMMISSION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, today I reintroduced legislation in the House of Representatives aimed at addressing the looming financial crisis facing the Nation, the Securing America's Future Economy (SAFE) Commission Act. The bill would establish a national bipartisan commission that will put everything—entitlement spending as well as all other Federal programs and our Nation's tax policies—on the table and require Congress to vote up or down on its recommendations in their entirety, similar to the process set in 1988 to close military bases. Mandating congressional action on the panel's recommendations is what differentiates this commission from previous ones.

Support for the bill is coming from both sides of the aisle. I submit for the RECORD an op-ed by former Senators Bob Kerrey and Warren Rudman that ran in the Washington Post, an op-ed by former Congressman Tim Penny that ran in the Washington Times, columns by David Broder and Robert Samuelson, and editorials from the Dallas Morning News, and the Orlando Sentinel on the topic of entitlement reform.

This legislation will be good for the future of America.

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 28, 2006]

SECURING FUTURE FISCAL HEALTH

[By Bob Kerrey and Warren B. Rudman]

The economic and moral case for long-term reform of fiscal policy is clear. Yet politicians refuse to act. If this stalemate persists, it could end in catastrophe.

Over the next 30 years, spending on federal programs is on track to go up by 50 percent as a share of the economy. If revenues remain at their historical level, the resulting deficits will approach 20 percent of gross domestic product by 2036—almost 10 times the current size. The debt will surge to 200 percent of GDP—twice what it was at the end of World War II.

Political realities explain why nothing has been done about this. Changing course would require substantial spending cuts from projected levels or equivalent tax increases. Neither party wants to be the first to propose these tough choices out of fear that the other side would attack it. Similarly, neither side wants to discuss possible compromises of its own priorities, out of fear that the other side will take the concessions and run. Unfortunately, these fears are justified.

Since the regular legislative process seems incapable of dealing with the impending crisis, some alternative has to be found. President Bush has suggested a commission. Having served on many commissions, we understand their potential value. We also understand how they can go wrong. In our view, a new commission could be very useful, but only if it recognizes fiscal and political realities. It needs five elements to succeed.

First, it has to be truly bipartisan. Any perception that the commission's purpose is to facilitate swift enactment of a partisan agenda would doom it to failure. It must have bipartisan co-chairs and equal representation. Doing otherwise in the current partisan environment would be a waste of time and money.

Second, it must have a broad mandate. While it is critical to control the growth of entitlements, particularly Medicare and Social Security, the commission should examine all aspects of fiscal policy.

Third, all options must be on the table. If either side sets conditions, the other won't participate. Republicans cannot take tax increases off the table, and Democrats cannot take benefit reductions off the table.

Fourth, the commission needs to engage the public in a genuine dialogue about the trade-offs inherent in realistic solutions. When people are armed with the facts and given the opportunity for honest dialogue, they are willing to set priorities and make hard choices.

Fifth, the commission's recommendations should be given an up-or-down vote in Congress, allowing for amendments that would not reduce the total savings. Absent that, the report would likely join many others on a shelf.

Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.) and Sen. George Voinovich (R-Ohio) have put forward a proposal that satisfies most of these elements. They would create a bipartisan commission with a broad mandate to examine long-term fiscal challenges. All policy options would be on the table. The commission would solicit input from the public and develop legislation that Congress and the president would be required to act on. Its work would address four key concerns: the unsustainable gap between projected spending and revenue, the need to increase national savings, the implications of foreign ownership of U.S. government debt and the lack of emphasis on long-term planning in the budget process.

A commission with these attributes could give all parties the political cover they need to tackle the tough choices and develop a bipartisan consensus for solutions. This would be invaluable regardless of who controls Congress or the White House.

In the end, of course, elected representatives, not a commission, will have to make the hard decisions. But a commission that produced solutions with meaningful bipartisan support would provide a catalyst for action. If Congress were required to vote on the commission's recommendations, opponents would be challenged to produce solutions of their own.

Advocates of extending tax cuts would be challenged to say how they would restrain spending enough to avoid cascading debt once the baby boomers begin to retire in

large numbers. Those who oppose reductions in current entitlement promises would be challenged to say how they would fund those promises without squeezing out other priorities or raising taxes to unacceptable levels that could damage the economy.

The Wolf-Voinovich proposal has been greeted with silence or outright hostility. It deserves better. This is a serious proposal by two leaders who regard the debt burden and draconian policy options we are leaving to future generations as a moral stain on our nation's character.

To be sure, their proposal has shortcomings that must be corrected. Two improvements that are critical to the success of a commission are providing for bipartisan co-chairs and dividing the membership more evenly between parties than the current 9-6 split in favor of Republican appointments. These problems are not minor technicalities, but they could be fixed in negotiations with potential Democratic co-sponsors.

Time is running out to enact reforms. Wolf and Voinovich have come up with a credible way to get the process started. Any takers?

[From the Washington Times, Sept. 4, 2006]
TAXES AND SPENDING—SUPPORT WOLF'S BILL
ON ENTITLEMENTS

(By Timothy J. Penny)

Every American is familiar with the story of the "Boston Tea Party." In 1773 the British parliament passed the Tea Act, which then inflamed the colonial issue of "taxation without representation." In response to the "tea tax" dozens of courageous colonists who called themselves the "Sons of Liberty"—boarded three British ships and dumped 45 tons of tea into the Boston Harbor.

I have come to believe that we need a modern day equivalent of the Boston Tea Party. Here is why I have arrived at this conclusion: Our nation's current fiscal policies are creating a mountain of debt that our grandchildren will be forced to repay through higher taxes. The unfunded promises we have made to recipients of Social Security and Medicare and other entitlement programs will almost certainly lead to higher taxes on today's children and those yet to be born. In my view, that amounts to "taxation without representation."

The British parliament paid no heed to the American colonists because the Americans had no vote or voice in the halls of government. Similarly, today's Congress seldom considers the long-term consequences of its budget decisions because kids don't vote.

Part of the problem lies with the current congressional budget process. On Capitol Hill the bulk of time and attention each year is devoted to the annual appropriations bills. While these bills—which fund defense and domestic programs—are important, they constitute only about one-third of all the money spent by the federal government. The other two thirds of spending goes to so-called "mandatory" programs: interest on the debt and entitlement programs, such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Though representing the vast majority of dollars spent every year, these "mandatory" spending programs receive little—if any—debate on Capitol Hill. The expenditures are essentially automatic. That is not right.

Why shouldn't every dollar of expenditure come under close review every year? More attention must be paid to these mandatory programs because of their long-range costs. Before long, Social Security and Medicare alone will consume virtually all the taxes paid by working Americans. It is not fair to the next generation to saddle them with enormous costs for entitlement programs and leave them no alternative except to reduce spending for other priorities or to pay ever higher taxes.

Unlike our patriot forbears, we do not have to resort to extreme measures. But we do need an uprising of the American public demanding that our elected representatives do their jobs. By e-mail, letters, phone calls or speaking out at town meetings, we must make our voices heard. We must speak out for those who are too young to speak for themselves.

When we speak out, we can specifically ask legislators to join their colleague, Rep. Frank Wolf, Virginia Republican, in sponsoring legislation to create a bipartisan entitlement commission. Mr. Wolf is a member of the appropriations committee, and understands that entitlement spending deserves closer scrutiny than is provided in the current budget process. He realizes that the difficult decisions required—if entitlement spending is to be brought under control—can only be achieved through a bipartisan effort. He also believes that all options must be on the table. Finally, and most importantly, he sees that as a matter of morality and fairness to future generations.

So, during the coming weeks as legislators wrap up their work in Washington and return home to campaign, speak out for your children and grandchildren. If, after hearing from us, our elected officials refuse to endorse Mr. Wolf's reasonable approach, then, like the Boston Tea Party, we should throw them overboard this November.

[From the Washington Post, May 21, 2006]

BAILING THE FUTURE OUT OF DEBT

(By David S. Broder)

Almost forgotten in the rush events these past four months is the proposal President Bush offered in the State of the Union address for a bipartisan commission to examine the future of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other entitlement programs.

But that idea is due for a rebirth next month—in the form of legislation to create such a commission. Its sponsor, Rep. Frank Wolf, a veteran Republican from Virginia, is well aware of the hazards facing any such enterprise. But unlike the president, he is explicitly prepared to remove one giant roadblock by signaling that everything—including taxes—would be on the table.

The need for such a bipartisan approach is evident. As Charles Blahous, the White House aide who has been pursuing the commission idea, told a Concord Coalition forum last week, Medicare and Medicaid are growing far faster than inflation and will consume an ever-larger share of the budget as the baby boomers reach retirement age, starting in just a couple of years. Social Security and veterans' pensions are moving in the same direction.

"We cannot wait until 2040," when those programs could crater, Blahous said. "And we can't just do incremental reform."

Bush took his first stab at fixing Social Security last year with a proposal to create private accounts, but it ran into a buzz saw of opposition led by AARP and congressional Democrats and never came to a vote.

The commission, idea seemed a safe fallback when Bush floated it in January, but his overtures to Democrats were not accepted.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi publicly ridiculed the idea, and former Treasury secretary Robert Rubin, approached personally by the president, said that the mandate of the commission would have to be broad enough to include revenue before he would consider participating.

Months later, the White House insists it is still seeking partners for the project, and a spokesman told me that, "there is no litmus test" for participants.

But I have talked with many of the backstage players in this drama, and their sense

is that Bush will not allow his tax cuts to be weighed along with any savings on the benefits side—at least not before this November's midterm election.

Enter Frank Wolf, known as "the conscience of the House," because of his involvement in humanitarian causes here and overseas. "The issue is not just economic, it's moral," he told me. "We have 11 grandchildren, and I cannot square my generation laying off our debt on them."

"I supported all the president's tax cuts," Wold said, "but I look down the road and I see just a very bleak situation."

Wolf will propose a bipartisan commission that would hold hearings around the country and report back in six to nine months on steps to deal with the long-term budget crisis. His legislation, modeled on the procedure now used for closing surplus military bases, would require the House and Senate to hold a vote on the commission proposal—but allow each body and the president to submit an alternative that achieves at least as good a result.

Wolf's hope is that the commission would attract such figures as former representatives John Kasich, an Ohio Republican, and Charles Stenholm, a Texas democrat, or former Treasury secretaries Rubin and James A. Baker III.

His proposal meets most of the criteria set forth at last week's panel by David Walker, the head of the Government Accountability Office, as critical to a successful commission. But Walker said presidential support and leadership are also vital to success.

Wolf told me, "You'd hope the commission members wouldn't look at taxes first, but they have to look at everything." That was emphatically the view of everyone on the concord Coalition panel, including Walker, Stenholm, and two rather liberal economists, Isabel Sawhill and Maya MacGuineas, as well as Joseph Minarik of the business-backed committee for Economic Development.

The most conservative panelist, Stuart Butler of the Heritage Foundation, said that he accepted the idea that revenue would have to be open to discussion for the Democrats to "buy in."

But he proposed that conservatives could be mollified if the commission's mandate included an instruction that any changes in the tax code must help simplify the system and increase economic growth. "That way, it's win-win," he said.

The White House had scheduled a meeting for the president with some of the experts on the Concord Coalition panel to walk through the plans for such a commission. That session was postponed, and it has not been rescheduled.

But if the president is interested—and if he is willing to put "everything on the table"—the Wolf initiative could become his action-forcing device.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 10, 2007]

ENTITLED SELFISHNESS—BOOMER GENERATION
IS IN A STATE OF DENIAL

(By Robert J. Samuelson)

As someone born in late 1945, I say this to the 76 million or so subsequent baby boomers and particularly to Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, our generation's leading politicians: Shame on us. We are trying to rob our children and grandchildren, putting the country's future at risk in the process. On one of the great issues of our time, the social and economic costs of our retirement, we have adopted a policy of selfish silence.

As Congress reconvenes, pledges of "fiscal responsibility" abound. Let me boldly predict: On retirement spending, this Congress

will do nothing, just as previous Congresses have done nothing. Nancy Pelosi promises to "build a better future for all of America's children." If she were serious, she would back cuts in Social Security and Medicare. President Bush calls "entitlement spending" the central budget problem. If he were serious, he, too, would propose cuts in Social Security and Medicare.

They are not serious, because few Americans—particularly prospective baby-boom retirees—want them to be. There is a consensus against candor, because there is no constituency for candor. It's no secret that the 65-and-over population will double by 2030 (to almost 72 million, or 20 percent of the total population), but hardly anyone wants to face the implications:

By comparison, other budget issues, including the notorious earmarks, are trivial. In 2005, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid (the main programs for the elderly) cost \$1.034 trillion, twice the amount of defense spending and more than two-fifths of the total federal budget. These programs are projected to equal about three-quarters of the budget by 2030, if it remains constant as a share of national income.

Preserving present retirement benefits automatically imposes huge costs on the young—costs that are economically unsound and socially unjust. The tax increases required by 2030 could hit 50 percent, if other spending is maintained as a share of national income. Or much of the rest of government (from defense to national parks) would have to be shut down or crippled. Or budget deficits would balloon to quadruple today's level.

Social Security and Medicare benefits must be cut to keep down overall costs. Yes, some taxes will be raised and some other spending cut. But much of the adjustment should come from increasing eligibility ages (ultimately to 70) and curbing payments to wealthier retirees. Americans live longer and are healthier. They can work longer and save more for retirement.

Because I've written all this before, I can anticipate some of the furious responses from prospective retirees. First will be the "social compact" argument: We paid to support today's retirees; tomorrow's workers must pay to support us. Well, of course they will pay; the question is how much. The alleged compact is entirely artificial, acknowledged only by those who benefit from it. My three children (ages 16 to 21) didn't endorse it. Judging from the e-mail I receive, neither did many 20- or 30-somethings.

Next I'll hear that the Social Security and Medicare trust funds, intended to cover future benefits, have been "plundered." Blame Congress and the White House—not us. This is pure fiction.

Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are pay-as-you-go programs. Present taxes pay present benefits. In 2005, 86 percent of Social Security payroll taxes went to pay current retiree benefits. True, excess taxes had created a "surplus" in the Social Security trust fund (it hasn't been "plundered") of \$1.66 trillion in 2005; but that equaled less than four years' worth of present benefits. More important, Medicare and Medicaid represent three-quarters of the projected spending increase for retirees by 2030.

All the misinformation bespeaks political evasion. With his rhetorical skills, Clinton might have raised public understanding. Instead, he lowered it by falsely denouncing the Republicans for attempting to "destroy" Medicare. The first refuge of good Democrats is to accuse the Republicans of conspiring against old folks by trying to dismantle Social Security and Medicare. And Bush's credibility is shot, because he made the problem worse. His Medicare drug benefit in-

creases spending, and though it could have been justified as part of a grand bargain that reduced other benefits, its isolated enactment was a political giveaway.

The failure to communicate also implicates many pundits and think tanks, liberal and conservative. Pundits usually speak in bland generalities. They support "fiscal responsibility" and "entitlement reform" and oppose big budget deficits. Less often do they say plainly that people need to work longer and that retirees need to lose some benefits. Think tanks endlessly publish technical reports on Social Security and Medicare, but most avoid the big issues. Are present benefits justified? How big can government become before the resulting taxes or deficits harm the economy?

Opportunities for gradual change have been squandered. These public failings are also mirrored privately. I know many bright, politically engaged boomers who can summon vast concern or outrage about global warming, corporate corruption, foreign policy, budget deficits and much more—but somehow, their own Social Security and Medicare benefits rarely come up for discussion or criticism. Older boomers (say, those born by 1955) are the most cynical, hoping their benefits will be grandfathered in when inevitable cuts occur in the future.

Our children will not be so blind to this hypocrisy. We have managed to take successful programs—Social Security and Medicare—and turn them into huge problems by our self-centered inattention. Baby boomers seem eager to "reinvent retirement" in all ways except those that might threaten their pocketbooks.

[From The Dallas Morning News, June 8, 2006]

DEEP IN THE BUDGET HOLE—BIPARTISAN PANEL COULD HELP COUNTRY DIG OUT

When you're almost \$10 trillion in the hole, you've got to call somebody, right?

Fortunately, GOP Rep. Frank Wolf has a suggestion to deliver us from the gates of budget hell. The Virginia legislator introduced legislation yesterday that would establish a bipartisan commission charged with presenting the choices required to balance the budget.

The panel would function like the commission that former Texas GOP Rep. Dick Armey launched to close down unnecessary military bases. An independent group would give Congress a budget package, which legislators would vote up or down on unless the House and Senate come up with better solutions.

President Bush proposed a version of this approach earlier this year when he called for a bipartisan commission to recommend how Washington can control runaway spending on Social Security, Medicare and other big guaranteed programs.

But Mr. Wolf understands that the budget challenges are not all about spending. They also involve taxes and how much revenue the Treasury needs to pay for the services Americans demand.

In an encouraging sign, White House economic adviser Allen Hubbard recently acknowledged that any bipartisan panel probably would look at taxes.

He wasn't saying the White House is backing off its fondness for tax cuts, but it was a Washington way of saying, "Let's look at the whole range of choices."

We encourage North Texas representatives to line up as sponsors of Mr. Wolf's legislation and help get it through the House this summer. (The delegation's chief deficit fighter, GOP Rep. Jeb Hensarling of Dallas, told us last week that he wants to look at the proposal.)

It's time Washington reaches out for help.

By the numbers: \$9.6 trillion: The amount of debt Congress recently authorized the Treasury to borrow (the limit was \$6.4 trillion four summers ago); \$2.8 trillion: The likely 2007 federal budget; \$399 billion: Next year's interest expense on the federal debt; \$27,000: What every man, woman and child would owe to eliminate the federal debt; 37.4 percent: How much of the gross domestic product the federal debt consumes.

[From the Orlando Sentinel, June 12, 2006]

GET ON WITH IT

Our position: A panel on Medicare and other issues would get needed talks started.

Finally, someone in Congress has taken up President Bush's call for a bipartisan commission on the looming financial crisis if no changes are made to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

Unchecked growth in the cost of these programs in coming decades will devastate the economy by forcing some combination of huge tax increases, drastic spending cuts or massive borrowing.

This past week, Republican Rep. Frank Wolf of Virginia proposed a panel aptly named SAFE, to secure America's future economy. Its bipartisan experts would deliver a package of recommendations to Congress on an up-or-down vote.

Mr. Wolf says he is open to suggestions on his proposal. Members unwilling to support it have a moral obligation to come forward with something they deem better.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VALERIE PLAME WILSON COMPENSATION ACT

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of Congress one of the human impacts caused by the indiscretion of government officials regarding the covert identity of Central Intelligence Agency operative Valerie Plame Wilson.

As nearly every American knows, and as most of the world has heard, the covert CIA identity of Valerie Plame Wilson was exposed to the public as part of an Administration response to a critical op-ed published in the New York Times by Mrs. Plame Wilson's husband, Joe Wilson.

The national security ramifications for this act have been discussed thoroughly on this floor, in the news media, and I am quite certain behind CIA's closed doors. Today I intend to call my colleagues' attention to the human toll that this "outing" has had on one, often overlooked, individual. That person is Valerie Plame Wilson.

While the media, Congress, and the judiciary have gone to great lengths to discuss the impact of this unfortunate act on politicians, bureaucrats, agents in the field, and the suspected perpetrators of the outing, few have looked at the impact that the outing has had on Mrs. Plame Wilson and her family.

On July 14, 2003, Mrs. Plame Wilson's professional life was forever altered, and her CIA career irrevocably ruined by the syndicated publication of a column, which revealed Mrs. Plame Wilson's identity as a covert CIA officer. Since this time, numerous reports on Mrs. Plame Wilson's personal history have surfaced

in the press, official government documents, and by government officials.

Following the initial outing in the media, Mrs. Plame Wilson's future as a covert CIA operative ceased to exist and her career of two decades was destroyed. On January 9, 2006, Mrs. Plame Wilson resigned from the CIA, recognizing that any future with the Agency would not include any work for which she had been highly trained. For these reasons, and under these distressing conditions, Mrs. Plame Wilson voluntarily resigned from the Agency.

Despite Mrs. Plame Wilson's 20 years of federal service, she does not meet the minimum age requirement to receive her retirement annuity. She has been left without a career.

I am introducing legislation to allow Mrs. Plame Wilson to qualify for her annuity, as one who has served her country for two decades, and waive the age requirement for collecting it. To best demonstrate the annuity for which Mrs. Plame Wilson may qualify if this legislation were to pass, I am submitting for the record a document sent to Mrs. Plame Wilson by the CIA. It outlines her deferred annuity and testifies to 20 years of service. The document bears no indications of classified material as required by CIA procedures, and was sent via regular postal mail after Mrs. Plame Wilson was no longer in the employ of the CIA. Legal experts have assured me that this is not a classified document.

I believe that this is one small measure to help send a message that we must stand up for public service officers, such as Mrs. Plame Wilson, who have been treated wrongly despite their loyalty and sacrifice to country. For those who have been, for all practicable purposes, pushed out of public service for reasons unrelated to performance, but instead seeded in politics, we should not turn our backs.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2006.

Mrs. VALERIE WILSON

DEAR MRS. WILSON, This letter is in response to your recent telephone conversation with regarding when you would be eligible to receive your deferred annuity. Per federal statute, employees participating under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Special Category, who have acquired a minimum of 20 years of service, are eligible to receive their deferred annuity at their Minimum Retirement Age (MRA). Your MRA is age 56, at which time you'll be eligible to receive a deferred annuity.

Your deferred annuity will be based on the regular FERS computation rate, one percent for every year of service vice the FERS Special rate of 1.7% for every year of service. You will receive 1.7% for each year of overseas service, prorated on a monthly basis, after January 1, 1987 in the calculation of your annuity. Our records show that since January 1, 1987, you have acquired 6 years, 1 month and 29 days of overseas service.

Following is a list of your federal service: Dates of Service: CIA, CIA (LWOP), CIA (P/T 40), from 11/9/1985 to 1/9/2006—total 20 years, 7 days.

Based on the above service and your resignation on January 9, 2006, your estimated deferred annuity is \$21,541.00 per year, or \$1795 per month, beginning at age 56.

The above figures are estimates for your planning purposes. The Office of Personnel Management, as the final adjudicator of creditable service and annuity computations, determines final annuity amounts.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

TRIBUTE TO THE REVEREND
JAMES D. PETERS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Mr. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the extraordinary life and exceptional accomplishments of the Reverend James D. Peters, Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church. This remarkable gentleman merits both our recognition and esteem as his spiritual leadership, service and lifelong devotion to civil rights have done much to advance the lives of our people.

While many have made notable contributions to our community, few have left a legacy of progress as has Reverend Peters. He is a powerful champion of social justice and has led with those who fought for civil liberty and whose deeds changed the very fabric of our nation. Reverend Peters has touched countless lives and he has built a ministry that joins faith with equality. He is a dynamic pastor whose teaching and counsel is infused with a spiritual fervor that constantly edifies us and moves us to do what is right.

Reverend Peters' journey began in Washington D.C., the son of a baseball player. He grew up poor but he grew up in church. He was a gifted student and grew to recite Longfellow, Keats and Kipling. He worked full time at the Navy Annex near the Pentagon and struggled to get an education, attending night school for ten years. Reverend Peters recently noted that "I couldn't eat in restaurants, I couldn't sleep at a hotel or go to the movies. I could never go to school with white children. All the way through high school, I never sat in a classroom with white people, not until I went to college." Many of us in this country forget how far we've come. Although civil liberties have deep roots in our republic, there was a time when fundamental decency and equality for all people were not a part of our shared experience. The courage and the work of Reverend Peters during the dark days of the Civil Rights Movement helped make fairness and equal rights part of our shared values. Reverend Peters was at the founding meeting of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and he worked directly with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He faced guns and dogs during the marches and civil rights demonstrations in Albany, Georgia, in Selma and in Birmingham, Alabama. He was part of the March on Washington that led to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial where Dr. King gave his unparalleled "I Have a Dream" speech.

Reverend Peters' work ethic and his service to the Civil Rights Movement molded a life of enduring accomplishment and a vocation that included ministering to congregations in Connecticut and Virginia. He became pastor of Denver's New Hope Baptist Church in February of 1979 and during his twenty-eight year tenure, he led his congregation through construction of a new church home and the expansion of services for an ever growing congregation. As a spiritual leader, he has bur-

nished a reputation as a powerful advocate for inclusion and expanding opportunity for all people. He served as a volunteer member of the Denver Housing Advisory Board for approximately ten years assisting the twenty-two thousand public housing residents in changing the quality and image of public housing.

He served as a member of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission for nine years, serving as its Chairman from 1987 to 1989, during which time he traveled throughout Colorado and held countless civil rights hearings to secure justice and equality for all citizens.

Reverend Peters has received service recognitions from numerous organizations including the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Anti-Defamation League, the Denver Post and the NAACP. He is also the recipient of the Carle Whitehead Award, the highest award given by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Reverend James Peters is an unrelenting advocate for the causes that elevate the human condition and his immeasurable contributions to the spiritual life of our community merit our gratitude. He has led in the struggle for freedom, justice and equality for all people. But Reverend Peters' leadership goes to the heart of what he means to be a leader. "Nathalia Young, a pastor at New Hope Baptist Church. . . remembers how he helped homeless people himself, not delegating it to a deacon. (He) would get into his own car, and use his own money to get someone a hotel room. And then there was a Christmas season one year, when a woman and her children were suddenly homeless. 'He didn't just get her connected with housing but also supplied her with gifts and food.'" Reverend Peters leads by example.

In a recent Denver Post article, Reverend Peters expressed "concern that young people don't understand what it was like before the Civil Rights Act and that some believe King's message is now irrelevant." At some level, I think we all share his concern. But I would submit that Reverend Peters' legacy provides a powerful example that not only affirms Dr. King's undertaking, but inspires all of us to remember the struggle and keep faith with those who have gone before.

Reverend Peters' tenure as pastor of New Hope Baptist Church is quickly drawing to a close. His leadership has been exemplary and his contributions are rich in consequence. On behalf of the citizens of the 1st Congressional District of Colorado, I wish to express our gratitude and look forward to his continued involvement in the life of our community.

Please join me in paying tribute to Reverend James D. Peters, a distinguished spiritual and civic leader. The values, leadership and commitment he exhibits set the mark and compel us to continue the work that distinguishes us as Americans.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS IN
TURKMENISTAN: IS ANYONE LISTENING?

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, the Administration's crusade to spread democracy

to the Middle East has been a major disappointment, but opportunity is knocking nearby in Central Asia and we should be taking advantage of it. But there isn't much time.

The opportunity for positive change was created by the death late last month of Turkmenistan's despotic dictator, President Saparmurat Niyazov, whose role model was Josef Stalin. The urgency for the United States to act is created by those who want to follow in his footsteps.

The Turkmen people deserve the right to elect their leaders in free and fair elections. That seems highly unlikely because of the junta that has tried to consolidate power in the aftermath of Niyazov's sudden demise. Consisting of the remaining holdouts from Niyazov's government and controlled by his former bodyguards, the junta leaders have pledged to continue the "dear leader's" style of "democracy," ordering yet another statue of him to be built.

The constitution has been re-written to allow the junta's candidate to run in the presidential elections—scheduled for February 11—virtually unchallenged. The regime's most competent opponents—the exiled community of business leaders and intellectuals—have effectively been prevented from contesting the elections.

For too long the United States has ignored Niyazov's abuses and we continue to fail to articulate our official position regarding relations with the "interim government." I call on the Secretary of State to condemn the junta's unconstitutional actions and demand that it allow its opponents to participate in the February 11 election. Until that happens, the United States must refuse to recognize the government in Ashgabat as legitimate, and order federal agencies, including Treasury, State and Justice, to block all of its banking activities.

Nurmuhammet Hanamov, the founding chairman of the Republican Party of Turkmenistan who was his country's former ambassador to Turkey and Israel, has written an incisive article in the Washington Post calling on the West to take advantage of Niyazov's passing to help lead his country toward Democracy. A leader of the prodemocracy movement, Mr. Hanamov was forced into exile and his two sons were assassinated in 2005 in retaliation for his outspoken opposition to the regime. I ask that his article be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that all may read the heartfelt plea of this courageous individual.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 3, 2007]

A NEW BEGINNING FOR TURKMENISTAN
(By Nurmuhammet Hanamov)

Last week Turkmenistan buried its brutal dictator, Saparmurat Niyazov. His ruthless reign spanned two decades, during which time his policies became increasingly irrational and unpredictable. The long list of Niyazov's crimes against our people includes: banning all political parties except his own and jailing his opponents; preventing thousands of "disloyal" citizens from traveling abroad; persecuting religious and ethnic minorities; outlawing opera; and shutting down regional hospitals, firing thousands of doctors and nurses. Under Niyazov, Turkmenistan became a corridor for heroin trafficking from Afghanistan to the West and gained for itself one of the highest heroin addiction rates in the world.

Above all, Niyazov was a selfish and kleptocratic despot, stashing billions in pro-

ceeds from the sale of the country's enormous natural gas resources in personal accounts in Western banks. He used this money to fuel his outlandish personality cult, building opulent palaces and golden statues of himself even as his people were deprived of basic necessities and suffer one of the world's lowest life expectancy rates. The West's indifference was striking compared with the relentless criticism by the United States and the European Union against the more benign regime of Alexander Lukashenko, president of gas-poor Belarus.

With Niyazov gone, the West has a historic second chance to help our country make a peaceful transition to democracy. Turkmenistan's interim rulers have unfortunately pledged to continue Niyazov's policies (even ordering new statues of him), and their efforts to grab power amount to a coup d'état. The former health minister—under the de facto control of Niyazov's Presidential Guard—has arrested the speaker of Parliament, who constitutionally is next in the line of succession. He has sealed the country's borders and, using other unconstitutional measures, has set the stage for his own unchallenged victory in presidential elections scheduled for Feb. 11.

The United States must send a clear message to Niyazov's holdouts in the "interim government" in Ashgabat: that they will not have its support unless they agree to hold free and fair elections—ones that allow all citizens of Turkmenistan, including exiled opposition leaders and political prisoners, to take part.

We know that the United States has tried to help the people of Turkmenistan in recent years, and thanks to American educational exchange programs, there is a thriving community of bright Turkmen students and intellectuals who are living in Western countries and are ready to return and help rebuild their country. This community is largely held together by the efforts of Khudaiberdy Orazov, a former chairman of the National Bank and an accomplished and energetic leader who was forced into exile several years ago. He was unanimously nominated to be a candidate in the February presidential elections by a broad coalition of opposition groups inside and outside of Turkmenistan. According to a recent poll, Orazov's candidacy would have the support of a majority of Turkmen voters. Until Orazov and other opposition candidates are allowed to contest the February elections, the United States and the European Union must refrain from recognizing the junta in Ashgabat and freeze all personal accounts of Niyazov and his cronies abroad. We hope that members of Congress and other government officials will visit Turkmenistan soon to personally deliver that message.

We must rebuild our country, and with the help of our friends and neighbors we can do it in an open and transparent way. Priorities for a democratically elected government during the initial post-Niyazov reconstruction must be to release all political prisoners, conduct open tenders and allow Western companies to bid for a stake in developing Turkmenistan's oil and gas fields; to consider new ways of getting our gas and oil to Western markets; to restore private property that Niyazov confiscated from Turkmen citizens; and to create a reconstruction fund using Niyazov's personal bank accounts and proceeds from the sale of oil and gas to revive the health-care and education systems.

The United States is spending billions of dollars trying to turn Afghanistan and Iraq—both deep in the throes of civil war—into democratic nations while all but abandoning their peaceful post-Soviet neighbors to the north. Turkmenistan is ready for a new beginning, and the West must finally step up to

the plate. To do otherwise would waste a historic opportunity and allow yet another case of popular discontent with an illegitimate government to become an anti-Western lost cause.

THE GENETIC INFORMATION
NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

HON. LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride today that I reintroduce the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act. I have championed this bill for nearly 12 years, and I am hopeful that this will be the year that it is finally enacted into law.

We all watched with excitement when the first phase of the Human Genome project was successfully completed in April 2003, as scientists finished sequencing the human genome. As a result of this breakthrough, scientists have now identified genetic markers for a variety of chronic health conditions, thereby increasing the potential for early treatment and prevention of numerous diseases.

Genetic issues are insinuating themselves into not only health care decisions, but into many other facets of Americans' lives. For example, under a program called Dor Yeshorim, Hasidic youth take a battery of genetic tests to determine whether they are carriers for any of 10 serious genetic disorders. Young men and women who are both carriers for a given disorder are discouraged from courting each other, based on the fact that there would be a 25 percent chance that their children would be born with a genetic disorder.

Today, there are over 15,500 recognized genetic disorders, affecting 13 million Americans. Yet, each of us possesses some potentially lethal genes. And despite the scientific advances that are helping people prevent these diseases or diagnose them early, those who partake of this innovative technology become potential victims of genetic discrimination. This legislation works to eliminate that potential.

In the past, some have called this legislation "a solution in search of a problem" and suggest that genetic discrimination is rare, if it even happens at all. Unfortunately this is not the case. Despite the fact that these tests are potentially life-saving, many Americans have not taken advantage of this technology because they fear discrimination by insurance companies and their employers.

And these fears are not unfounded. Throughout the 1970s, many African Americans were denied jobs, educational opportunities, and insurance based on their carrier status for sickle cell anemia, despite the fact that a carrier lacked the two copies of a mutation necessary to get sick. In 1998, Lawrence Livermore Laboratories in Berkeley was found to have been performing tests for syphilis, pregnancy, and sickle cell on employees without their knowledge or consent.

These abuses have only fed the public fear of genetic discrimination. Much to the detriment of America's public health and the future benefits of scientific research, this fear

has led many individuals to decide against having genetic tests or participating in genetic research.

A study conducted from 2001 to 2003, surveyed 86,859 adults about their willingness to undergo genetic testing. The results, published in June 2005, revealed that 40 percent of participants surveyed felt genetic testing was not a good idea for fear that health insurance companies might deny or drop them from their insurance plan.

The Genetics and Public Policy Center at Johns Hopkins University conducted similar surveys. In 2002, 85 percent of those surveyed did not want employers to have access to their genetic information. By 2004, that number had risen to 92 percent. In 2002, 68 percent of those surveyed said their genetic information should be kept private from health insurers; by 2004, it had increased to 80 percent.

Fears about privacy do not just resonate with the public. Health care professionals are also hesitant to make their genetic information available. In one survey of genetic counselors, 108 out of 159 indicated that they would not submit charges for a genetic test to their insurance companies primarily because of the fear of discrimination. Twenty-five percent responded that they would use an alias to obtain a genetic test so as to reduce the risk of discrimination and maximize confidentiality. And, 60 percent indicated they would not share the information with a colleague, because of the need for privacy and fear of job discrimination.

Clearly, fear of discrimination plays a significant role in a person's decisions about whether to take a genetic test; whether to do it under one's own name; paying out of pocket versus seeking insurance reimbursement; and with whom the information would be shared, including health care providers, coworkers,

and family members. The American people desperately want protections against genetic discrimination guaranteed under federal law and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act provides these protections.

This bill has broad support from the health community. The Coalition for Genetic Fairness which consists of 141 organizations has been outspoken in their support for GINA. Here in the House, along with my colleagues Ms. BIGGERT, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. WALDEN, we are joined by over 135 original cosponsors. The Senate has passed it twice, and even the White House has come out in support of this bill.

GINA provides the protections from genetic discrimination that Americans want and would allow genetic research to move forward in this country so we can all live healthier lives.

I urge its quick passage.